TWO SERMONS

Vpon the first words of Christs last Sermon,

IOHN 14. 1.

Being also the *last* Sermons of

RICHARD SIBBS D. D.

Preached to the honourable society of Grayes Inne, *Iune* 21. and 28. 1635.

Who the next Lords day following, dyed, and rested from all his labours.

2 Sam. 23. 1. *These are the last words of the sweet singer of Israel.*

The fourth Edition.

LONDON,
Printed by *Thomas Harper*, for *Lawrence Chapman*, and are to be sold at his shop at Chancery lane end, in Holborne, 1638.

Honoratiſſimo Domino,
Domino *Roberto*, Comiti
WARWICENSI,

Has
Mellitiſſimi Theologi
Richardi Sibbs, S. Theol.
Doctoris,

(Quem
Percharum habuit, cujuſque concionantis auditor erat aſſiduus, unà cum nobiliſſima Familia)

Cygneas Conciones,

In
Pientiſſimi Authoris Affectus, necnon ipſorum ſingularis obſequii

μνημόσυνον.

D. D. D.

Thomas Goodwin.
Philippus Nye.

The Authors Prayer before his Sermon.

GRacious & holy Father, which hast sanctified this day for thy owne service and worship, and for the furthering of us in the way of salvation, and hast made a most gracious promise, that when two or three bee

gathered together in thy name, thou wilt be there in the midſt of them, vouchſafe then wee beſeech thee the performance of this thy promiſe unto us now gathered together in thy Name to pray unto thee, to heare and ſpeake thy holy and bleſſed Word, and ſo ſanctifie our hearts by thy holy Spirit at this time, that wee may performe theſe holy ſervices as ſhall bee moſt to thy glory and our owne comfort. Vnworthy we are in our ſelves to appeare

peare in thy moſt holy preſence, both by reaſon of the ſins of our nature, and the ſins of our lives, even ſince that time that wee have had ſome knowledge of thy bleſſed truth; which holy truth we have not entertained nor profeſſed as wee ſhould have done, but often times againſt the light that thou haſt kindled in our hearts by thy Word and Spirit, we have committed many ſinnes; and amongſt the reſt, we confeſſe our ſinnes againſt thy holy

Ordinance, our not preparing our hearts unto it, nor profiting by it as wee ſhould and might have done, giving thy Majeſty hereby juſt cauſe to curſe thy owne holy Ordinance unto us: but thou art a gracious and merciful Father unto us in Ieſus Chriſt, in the abundance of thy love and mercy: in him wee come unto thee, beſeeching thee for his ſake not to give us up to theſe inward and ſpirituall judgements. But vouchſafe us a true inſight into our

our owne eſtates, without deceiving of our owne ſoules, and from thence true humiliation; and then we beſeech thee to ſpeake peace unto us in thy Chriſt, and ſay to our ſoules by thy holy Spirit, that thou art our ſalvation: and for clearer evidence that wee are in thy favour, let us finde the bleſſed worke of thy holy Spirit opening our underſtandings, clearing our judgements, kindling our affections, diſcovering our corruptions, framing us every

way to be ſuch as thou maiſt take pleaſure and delight in: and becauſe thou haſt ordained thy holy word to bee a light unto our feet, & a guide and direction to all our wayes and pathes, and to be a powerfull means to bring us more and more out of the thraldome of ſin and Sathan, to the bleſſed liberty of thy children: we beſeech thee therefore to bleſſe thy word to theſe, and all other good ends and purpoſes for which thou haſt ordained it; and grant

grant wee beſeech thee, that now at this time out of it wee may learne thy holy will, and then labour to frame our lives thereafter, as may bee moſt to thy glory and our owne comfort, and that for Ieſus Chriſt his ſake, thine onely Sonne, and our bleſſed Saviour, *Amen.*

The

The

THE FIRST SERMON.

Ioh. 14. ch. 1. verſe.

Let not your hearts be troubled: ye beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in me.

HOly men as they be trees of righteouſneſſe, and deſire to bee fruitfull at all times, ſo moſt eſpecially towards their end, having but a ſhort time to live in the world, they be willing to leave the world with

with a good savour; so it was with *Iacob*; so with *Moses*, as appeares in his excellent Song made before his death; you may see it in King *Salomon* and *David* before their deaths, but especially in our Saviour. The nearer to heaven, the more heavenly minded; when grace and glory are ready to joyne, the one to bee swallowed up of the other, then grace is most glorious. All the passages of Christ are comfortable, but none more comfortable then those Sermons of his, that were delivered a little before his death; of all words that come from loving men to those they love, such are most remarkable as be spoken when they be ready to dye,

dye, becauſe then men are moſt ſerious, they being about the moſt ſerious buſineſſe: then they be wiſeſt, and beſt able to judge: for the conſideration of their end makes them wiſe. And therefore ſaith God, *Oh that my people were wiſe to conſider their latter end!* And, *teach me to number my dayes, that I may apply my heart to wiſedome*, ſaith *Moſes*. And indeed there is no wiſedome to that: for it teacheth men to paſſe a right judgement upon al things in the world: they bee no longer drunke with the proſperity of the world, they bee no longer ſwayed with opinion, but they paſſe an eſtimation of things as they are. Pſal. 90.

Beſides, love at that time is

is especially set on worke. Therefore our blessed Saviour being now to offer himselfe a sacrifice on the Crosse, he sweetly delivereth these words before his departure, *Let not your hearts be troubled:* Let us heare them therefore, as the dying words of our Saviour, to his Disciples, and in his Disciples, to us all, as in the 17 of Saint *Iohn*, *I pray not for them onely, but for all such as shall beleeve in me*, through their word, for his comforts concerne us all, as his prayers did.

This Chapter is sweetly mixt of comforts, counsels, and gracious promises, but especially it affords matter of comfort: marke who it is that gives this comfort, our bles-

led Saviour; And at what time, when he was to sacrifice himselfe.

What admirable love and care, and pitie is in this mercifull high Priest of ours, that should so think of comforting his Disciples, as to forget himselfe, and his owne approaching death? It is the nature of love so to doe, and we should imitate our blessed Saviour in it: you see how hee laboureth to strengthen them, especially towards his end, hee knew they would then need it most, and therefore hee endeavoureth by all meanes to strengthen them both by counsell, as here by the Passeover, and by a newly instituted Sacrament.

But what need wee wonder

der at this in our blessed Saviour who so regarded us, as he left heaven, tooke our nature, became man; put himselfe under the Law, became sinne.

The words containe a dissuasion from over-much trouble, and then a direction to beleeve in God, and Christ: comforts must bee founded on strong reasons; For wee are reasonable and understanding creatures, and God workes on us answerably to our principles. He stayes our spirits by reasons stronger then the grievance. For what is comfort, but that which establisheth and upholds the soule against that evill which is feared or felt, from a greater strength of reason which over-

over-masters the evill. If the grievance bee but even with the comfort, then the consolation workes not: but Christs comforts are of an higher nature, then any trouble can be, for hee not onely dissuades from trouble, but also perswades to confidence, *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.*

The occasion of this comforting them, and of removing their discouragements was this: In the former Chapter, he had told them, that hee should leave them, and that they should leave him, the best of them all, even *Peter* should take offence at him, and deny him, and that all the rest should leave him: From whence they might

might gather, that the approaching trouble should be great, That should cause *Peter* to deny him, and them all to forsake him: And thence must needs arise great scandals. Our Saviour saw by the power of his God-head, into their hearts, and like enough, in their lookes he saw a spirit of discouragement seizing on them, for his departure, and *Peters* fall, their forsaking of him, and the persecutions that would follow. And therefore Christ discerning this dejection of their spirits, he raiseth them by this, *Let not your hearts be troubled.* The heavenly Physician of our souls applyeth then the remedy when it is the fittest season.

There

There was some good in their trouble, something naturally, and something spiritually good. There was ground of naturall trouble at the departure of such a friend, at the hearing of such persecutions: For wee are flesh, not steele, and in that sence, Christ was troubled himselfe to shew the truth of his manhood: nay trouble is the seasoning of all heavenly comforts, so as there were no comforts, if there were no trouble: and therefore this naturall trouble was not disallowed by Christ. There was likewise something spiritually good, in this trouble, they loved their Master, who they saw was going away; and they knew it was a shamefull thing

thing for them to forsake him: there was love in them towards him all this while, Christ could discerne gold in oare, some good in a great deale of ill; and therefore loved them againe, and manifested it by comforting them, *Let not your hearts bee troubled:* They were right in this principle, that all comfort depends on the presence of Christ. And so the main ground of the sorrow was good. For as all heavenly light, and heate, and influence comes from the Sunne, it being all gathered into that body: so all heavenly comfort is gathered into Christ, and therefore must come to us from Christs presence, bodily or spiritually. Their errour

was

was in tying all comfort to
bodily, a corporall pre-
ence. As if it were neceſſa-
y for the Sunne to come
owne and abide upon the
arth, to beſtow its heat and
influence; and therefore he
els them, that though hee
was to goe away, yet hee
would ſend another com-
forter, the holy Ghoſt.

And then they were o-
vercome by an opinion, that
it would goe worſe with
them when Chriſt was
gone: therefore Chriſt tel-
leth them that it ſhould be
better for them, and indeed
it was better: Chriſt did not
take away his bleſſed pre-
ſence for their diſadvantage,
but for their good. GOD
never takes any thing from
his children, but he maketh
it

it up in a better kinde. If Christ takes away his bodily presence, he leaveth his spirituall presence, and more abundantly.

So that though they were led with sensible things and what they saw not, they could hardly beleeve, yet Christ lookes to what is good in them, and accepts it: he saw what was naught in them, with a purpose to purge it, what was naturally weake in them, to strengthen it, and therefore hee counsels them, *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

The thing that I will first observe out of the words, is, That the best Christians are subject to be troubled, to bee pensive, and dejected more then should be.

Indeed

Indeed our Saviour Christ himselfe was troubled, but his trouble was like the shaking of cleare water in a crystall glasse. There was no mud in the bottome; but our trouble is of another kinde, and apt to be inordinate.

Wee may carry this truth through the whole Scripture, and shew how *Hannah* was in bitternesse of spirit, which exceeded so, that *Eli* a good man mistakes her, supposing that shee was overcome with drinke.

Hezekiah a good King, was in such bitternesse, that like a Crane or Swallow, he did chatter. And *David* complained that his spirit was over-whelmed within him; and *Ionah* cryes out,

that hee was in the belly of hell.

And God will have it so, partly for conformity to our head; and partly that wee may be knowne to our selves, that we may discerne where our weakenesse lyeth; and so be better instructed to seek to him in whom our strength lyeth.

Hee suffers us likewise to be troubled for the preventing of spirituall sins, pride, and security, and the like.

And partly in regard of others, that we may be pittifull; Christ was man for this end, that he might be a mercifull high Priest, and we have much more need to know and feele the infirmities that are in our selves, that we may be mercifull to

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others; that we may not be harsh and censorious upon the troubles of others; from want of which consideration proceeded *Elies* rashnesse in passing that censure upon *Hannah*.

But how shall wee know that our hearts are more troubled then they should be? For I lay this for a ground: That we may sinne in being over-much troubled, at things for which it is a sinne not to be troubled; If they had not bene at all affected with the absence of Christ, it had been a sinne, and no lesse then stupidity: yet it was their sinne to be over-much troubled. In a word therefore for answer, a trouble is sinfull, when it hinders us in duty, or from

duty: when it hinders us in duties to God, or to others.

Or from duty, that is, when the ſoule is diſturbed by it, and like an Inſtrument out of tune, made fit for nothing, or like a limb out of joynt, that moves, not onely uncomelily, but painfully, and becomes unfit for action: when we finde this in our trouble, we may know it is not as it ſhould be.

There be ſome affections eſpecially that are cauſes of over-much trouble, feare of evils to come, ſorrow for evils that at preſent ſeize on us. Now when theſe doe hinder us from duty, or trouble us in duty, they bee exorbitant and irregular.

Naturally affections ſhould be helps to duty, they being the

the winde that carry the ſoule on, and the ſpirituall wings of the ſoule: ſo that a man without affections is like the dead ſea, that moves not at all. But then they muſt be regulated, and ordered, they muſt be raiſed up, and laid downe, at the command of a ſpiritual underſtanding: when they bee raiſed up of themſelves, by ſhallow and falſe conceits, and opinions, they be irregular, when they be raiſed up by a right judgment of things, and laid downe againe when they ought to bee, then they are right and orderly.

Now beſides the hurt that is in ſuch affections themſelves, Sathan loves to fiſh in theſe troubled waters, The affections are never

ſtirred and raiſed up irregularly, and exorbitantly, but Sathan joynes with them. And therfore we have need to keepe our affections of griefe and feare within their due bounds: Sathan is a curious obſerver of any exceſſe in our paſſions, and in juſt correction (to ſpeake the mildeſt of it) God lets looſe Sathan to joyne with that exceſſe. And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith wiſely, Let not the Sun goe downe upon your wrath, neither give place to the Divell, becauſe as ſoone as ever wee give way to any exceſſe of affection, Sathan fiſhes in theſe waters, and joynes with that exceſſe. He being a ſpirit of darkeneſſe, loves to dwell in the ſoule when it is in darkneſſe.

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That was *Sauls* caſe, hee was enviousat *David*, being of a proud and haughty ſpirit, that could not endure competition: and Sathan tooke his time to worke on him. And therefore it is ſaid he was troubled with an evill ſpirit.

But *trouble of Spirit* is too large an Argument, I will not now ſtand upon it, onely I will ſhew that wee ſhould not yeeld to exceſſe of trouble any way. And the reaſons are:

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First, we wrong our own selves when we give way to griefe and sorrow that is immoderate and inordinate. The soule is as it were put out of joynt by it, we make actions difficult unto us, the wheeles of the soule are thereby taken off, joy and comfort are as it were oyle to the soule. And therefore *Nehemiah* saith, The joy of the Lord is your strength; when therfore we give way to feare, and griefe, and such passions, it weakeneth the soule in action. And then againe they are as it were a cloud betwixt Gods love, and us, and so the soule is hindered of much comfort and enlargement: joy enlargeth the soule, but griefe streighteneth it: comfort raiseth

Chap. 8. 10.

raiſeth up the ſoule, griefe and ſorrow weigh downe the ſoule. A Chriſtian ſhould bee of a ſtraight, upright, and enlarged ſpirit. When therefore the ſpirit is ſtreightened, when it is preſt downe and dejected, a Chriſtian is not in his right minde, in his due and proper frame.

Beſides, if we regard God himſelfe, wee ſhould take heed that the ſoule bee not thus diſtempered, for by over-much ſorrow & griefe, what a great deale of diſhonour doe we to God, in proceeding from a miſtake of his goodneſſe and providence? And with over-much feare and ſorrow, there is alwayes joyned murmuring and diſcontent, and a ſpirit

unſubdued to God, and his Spirit. There is a wronging as of his care in providence, ſo of his graciouſneſſe in his promiſes. There is a grieving of his good Spirit, a queſtioning of his government, as if he did not diſpoſe of things as he ſhould, when we will have it one way, and God will have it another way. There is likewiſe a great deale of pride in dejections and diſcontent. The moſt diſcontented ſpirit in the world is the Divell, and none prowder. It argues a great deale of pride, and ſullennеſſe to be affectedly ſad, and dejected, as if ſuch worthy and excellent perſons as wee ſhould be ſo afflicted: or there were greater cauſe for us to be dejected then raiſed

railed up. Whereas if wee ballance our grounds of comfort (being Christians) as we should do, they would appeare incomparably above the grounds of our discouragements: so it is a wrong to God, and his truth, and his gracious sweet government to yeeld to a dejected sullen disposition.

It is likewise a wrong to others: for it maketh us unfit for any office of love to them, when we plodde and pore so much upon our discontentments, and drink up our spirits, and eate up our hearts, it disables the soule, taking away not onely the strength, but also the willingnesse of the soule.

Besides the scandall that it brings on Religion, and the

the best waies, as if there were not enough in Religion to comfort the soule.

But you will say, Religion breeds a great deale of trouble, and pensivenesse. It is indeed the speech of the shallow people of the world, Religion makes men sad.

And it is true, that as our Saviour Christ here had made his Disciples sad, by telling them that he would leave them, and that a great scandall would be taken at his Crosse, and shamefull suffering; but yet withall biddes them not be troubled, and gives them grounds of comfort: so Religion will make men sad: For it discovers truths, and sad truths. But the same Religion will cheare them up

up againe, yea, it casts them downe, that it may raise them up. The Sunne in the morning raiseth clouds, but when it hath strength it scatters them. GOD intending solid, and substantiall comfort, doth first beget troubles, and discovers true grounds of trouble: he lets us see that all is not well, but still as Religion brings any trouble, so it brings with it great remedies against these troubles: and that GOD that raiseth a soule to see just matter of griefe, will by its spirit shew its due, and right portion in comfort. Thus to bee sorrowfull and sad in some measure is from Religion, but that which will prevent the excesse and over-

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measure of it, is from Religion likewise.

So that it is a scandall to religion to bee over-much dejected.

Besides, though we should be troubled for sinne, yet to bee over-much troubled for sinne is a dishonour to Christ, and to the love of God, in Christ: for it is as if we had not in him a sufficient remedy for that great malady. As be it griefe for the troubles of the Church: as not to be troubled at the affliction of *Ioseph*, is branded for a sinne: So to be too much cast downe, as if Christ had cast off the government from his shoulders, or had not the name of the Church on his breast in heaven (as the high Priest had

had the names of the twelve Tribes) in his breast-plate, to be so cast downe as to be taken off from prayer, and from the use of all good means to helpe the Church, this is sinfull. So also when griefe for sin makes us forget the mercies of God in Christ, to forget the healing vertue of him our brazen Serpent, to neglect to search our grounds of comforts, and to yeeld to Sathan, to temptation. Even overmuch sadnesse, though it bee for sinne, or for the Church, it is hurtfull and scandalous.

Iosuah was much cast downe when he saw it went not well with *Israel:* but get thee up *Iosuah*, saith God, what dost thou lying here?

up

up and doe thy duty, consider what is amisse. There is an *Achan* in the Campe: and so when things go not well, let not your thoughts bee conversant about the matters of trouble, so much as about your duty. So we see it is incident to Gods people to bee over-much troubled, and we see also the reasons why it should not bee so, because it is injurious to God, to our selves, and others every way.

And after all this there is much reason in this, that *Christ* hath forbidden it, let not your hearts be troubled.

Object. But *Christ* could as well have cured it being God, as easily as forbidden it.

Answ. It is true, but he cures it by forbidding it: with the words

words, there went forth a spirit of comfort into their hearts, an influence of grace accompanied his cōmands, for the Word and Spirit goe together: *Christ* deales with men by men. The Spirit of comfort is a spirit of truth, and therefore God comforts by truths. Hee gives us sanctified understandings and affections, and then workes on them by sanctified truths.

And sometimes *Christ* cures it by reall comforts; for comforts are either rationall, which are fetched from grounds, which faith ministers, or reall from the presence of any thing which comforts; as the sight of friends, or the accommodating of us in any thing where-

wherein we see the love of God conveighed: how many reall comforts doth God bestow, when he fraeth us with conveniences in our way to Heaven, so that wee may reade the love of God in them: God doth not onely comfort us by his gracious promise, by his Word, and Sacraments, administring heavenly comforts by them, but also by the conveighing of himselfe, and his love by outward comforts that wee enjoy in the world: howsoever carnall men abuse them, making all things to worke for the worst, yet that love that intends Heaven, sweetens all things in the passage to Heaven to his children, because they see the love of

God

God in the least comfort.

Againe, obserue from this here, let not your hearts be troubled, what is the seat of comfort, the heart, the seat of comfort is the seat of griefe: There must be an application of comfort sutteable to the griefe, and the heart must be comforted.

And therefore in *Isa.* 40. 1. 2. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speake to the heart. As the griefe sinks & soakes to the root of the heart: so doe Christs comforts, like true cordials indeed, that goe as deep as the grievance. If the griefe goes to the heart, the comfort must go as deep. Now God the Father of spirits, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, knowes and searches our

spirits,

ſpirits, they know all the corners of the heart, they can baniſh feare & ſorrow, out of every cranny, and bring light, heat, and influence into every part of the ſoule. And therefore Chriſt ſaith, Let not your hearts be troubled.

Now for the waies whereby we muſt labour to comfort our hearts (amongſt many that I might ſpeake of) I will name a few.

Firſt of all, there muſt be a due ſearch into the heart, of the grounds of our trouble; for oftentimes Chriſtians are troubled, they cannot tell wherefore: As children that will complaine they know not why. I ſpeake not of hypocrites that will complaine of that which

which is not a true griefe to them; like some Birds that make greateſt noyſe, when they be furtheſt from their neſts: But of ſome poore Chriſtians that are troubled, but diſtinctly know not the ground of it. But ſearch the heart ingenuouſly, and truely to the bottome of it, and ſee if there be not ſome *Achan* in the Campe, ſome ſinne in the heart (for ſinne is like winde when it gets into the veines, it will have vent, and a troublesome one: and ſo will ſinne, if it get into the ſoule) it is that indeed which cauſeth all trouble. And therefore ſearch your hearts throughly, what ſinne lyeth there unrepented of, and for which you

have

have not beene humbled.

And when you have found out your ſinne, give it vent by confeſſion of it to God, and in ſome caſes to others.

And when we have done ſo, conſider what promiſes, and comforts, in that word of God are fitted to that condition; for we can be in no condition, but there are comforts for it, and promiſes fitted to yeeld comforts for every malady. And it will be the wiſedome of a Chriſtian to accommodate the remedy to the ſore of his heart. And therefore we ought to be skilfull and well ſeene, in the word of God, that we may ſtore up comforts before hād. Our Savi our Chriſt tels them before

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hand of the scandall of the Crosse, and of *Peters* deny-all, that they might lay up strength and spirituall armour against the day of tryall. Those comforts do not (for the most part) hold out in the day of adversity, which were not procured in the day of prosperity. It is not wisedome to be to learn Religion when wee should use it: and therefore let us be spirituall good husbands for our soules, by storing up comforts out of the Word of God, and then wee shall have no more to doe, then to remember the comforts that wee did before-hand know.

Non durant in adversis quæ non in pace quæsita.

And there be some promises of more generall use, that are *Catholica*, fitted for all

all sorts of grievances: and of these we must make use, when wee cannot thinke of particular ones. As the promises that concerne forgivenesse of sinne. Thinke of Gods mercy in pardoning sinne with admirations, because sinne will be presented us in such terrible colours, that if God be not presented in as gracious colours, we shall sinke: and therefore set out Christ in his mercies, and all-sufficiency, when sinne is aggravated to be in its hainousnesse, and out of measure sinfulnesse: as the Prophet *Micah* doth, who is a God like our God, that pardoneth iniquity, transgression and sin, &c. Likewise how many promises and comforts are there in

tha

that one promiſe, Luke 11. *He will give his ſpirit to them that aske him.* And here our Saviour promiſeth to ſend the Comforter: all graces and all comforts are included in the Spirit of grace, and comfort; his Spirit is a Spirit of all grace: and therefore our Saviour thought that hee promiſed enough when he ſaid he would ſend them the Comforter: and ſo what a world of comfort is in that promiſe! *All things ſhall worke together for the beſt to them that love God:* yea thoſe things that are worſt ſhall work together; though they be hoſtile, and oppoſite one to another, yet they joyne iſſue in this, they bee all for the good of Gods people. As in a clocke

the wheeles goe ſeverall wayes, but all joyne to make the clocke ſtrike: And ſo in the carriage and ordering of things, one paſſage croſſes another, but in the iſſue, we ſhal be able to ſay, all things worke together for the beſt, I found God turning all things for my good. And I could not have beene without ſuch a croſſe, ſuch an affliction. And ſo for preſent aſſiſtance in your callings or ſtraits, remember that promiſe made to *Ioſuah*, which is repeated in the 13. of the *Hebrewes*, I will not faile thee, nor forſake thee: a promiſe which is five times renewed in Scripture; and how much comfort is in that, that he will vouchſafe by his ſpirit a gracious preſence

ſence in al conditions whatſoever! And likewiſe that of *David*, Pſalme 23. Though I walke in the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet will I feare no ill, for thou art with me. It was a terrible ſuppoſition made, that though he ſhould walke in the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet hee would feare no evill. Theſe promiſes well digeſted will arme the ſoul with confidence, that it ſhall bee able to put any caſe of trouble: As in the 27 *Pſalme*, *David* puts caſes, The Lord is my ſtrength, the Lord is the light of my countenance, of whom ſhall I be afraid? Though thouſands ſhall riſe againſt me, yet in this I will be confident. If our hearts be eſtabliſhed by the word

of God, ſettled in the truth of ſuch promiſes, by the ſpirit of *God*, we may ſet God, and his truth, againſt all troubles that can ariſe from Sathan, and hell, and the inſtruments of Sathan, or our owne hearts. And therefore it is a great wrong to God, and his truth, if we know not our portion of comfort, and uſe it, as occaſion ſerves. More particulars I omit, leaving them to your owne induſtry, the Scripture being full of them.

4 When we have theſe promiſes, let us labour to underſtand them throughly, to underſtand the grounds of our comfort in them, and to beleeve the truth of them, which are as true as God, who is truth it ſelfe. And

then to love them, and digeſt them in our affections, and ſo make them our own, and then to walke in the ſtrength and comfort of them.

Labour likewiſe to have them freſh in memory: it is a great defect of Chriſtians, they forget their conſolation, as it is in the *Hebrewes*: though wee know many things, yet wee have the benefit of our comfort from no more then we remember. 5 Heb. 12 5.

But above all, if wee will keep our hearts from trouble, let us labour to keep unſpotted conſciences. Innocency and diligence are marvellous preſervers of comfort. And therefore if the conſcience bee ſpotted, and uncleane, waſh it in 6

the bloud of Christ, which is first purging, and then purifying. It first purgeth the soule being set aworke to search our sinnes, and confesse them, which maketh us see our need of Christ, who dyed to satisfie divine justice. Then God sprinkles our heart with his bloud, which was shed for all penitent sinners: by which when the heart is purged, the conscience will be soone satisfied also, by Christs bloud. And when it is purged, and pacified, then keep it cleane, for a foule soule is alwayes a troubled soule; and though it may be quiet, yet it is sure to breake out afterwards.

And because there can be no more comfort then there is care of duty: therefore together

gether with innocency, let us be carefull of all duties, in all our severall relations: let us consider in what relations we stand, and what duties we owe, and be carefull to satisfie them all. Neglect of duty is a debt, and debts are troublesome; When the soule reflects upon the omission of a necessary duty, I owe such a duty to such a person, I should have done such a thing, in such a relation, but I have omitted it, it is a disquietment, and that upon good grouuds; and if you have beene negligent, there must be an actuall renewing of the Covenant, and a setting upon the duty with fresh endeavours to make amends for former negligences, or else the

ſoule ſhall have no comfort, nor will God ſuffer it to admit of comfort. And therefore *worke out your ſalvation with feare and trembling.* The reaſon that men doe ſtill tremble, and are troubled with this doubt, and that feare, is, becauſe their ſalvatiō is not wrought out, ſomething is left undone, & their conſciences tell thē ſo.

8 But above all, that wee may receive comfort, let us labour for a ſpirit of faith. Therefore here it is ſaid, *You beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in me.* Chriſt brings them to faith for comfort. And hee ſets downe a double object of faith, *God*, that is, the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt: and *Chriſt*, conſidered as Mediator, and Chriſt brings

brings them to himselfe, (*Beleeve also in me*) because he would fence them against the future scandall of his suffering. As if hee should say; You will hereafter when you see mee so handled, and upon the Crosse, doubt, and call in question, whether I am God, and the Messiah of the world, or no. But if you beleeve in God, beleeve in me. For howsoever in love to you, and mankinde, I tooke mans nature on mee, and am abased; yet in my greatest abasement, remember this, that I am God. And surely there is nothing can stay the soule more, especially when it is deepely humbled, then to consider *God in the second person incarnate*, and abased,

and crucified, and made a curſe, and ſinne for us, to ſee the great God of heaven and earth, whoſe excellencies wee cannot comprehend, to take our nature, and in our nature to ſuffer for us thoſe things which hee did endure. This will eſtabliſh the ſoule indeed. Can the ſoule thinke that this was done for any ſmall, or to little purpoſe? Or can there be any griefe, or ſinne, that ſhould hinder comfort, or perſwaſion of the poſſibility of pardon, when the great God became man, on purpoſe to dye for ſinne? Wee may ſet this againſt all diſcouragements whatſoever. And therefore, beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in mee. Howſoever you ſee mee

abaſed,

abaſed, yet you may have comfort in my abaſement, for it is for you. And therefore ſaith *Paul*, *I rejoyce to know nothing, but Ieſus Chriſt and him crucified.* That which proud, and Atheiſticall Heathens took ſcandall at, that he rejoyceth in, *God forbid that I ſhould glory in any thing, but in the Croſſe of Chriſt*, Peace of conſcience, joy in the holy Ghoſt, reconciliation, and title to happineſſe is all founded upon Chriſt crucified.

And then againe you ſee he joynes both together (*Ye beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in me*) to ſhew the diſtinction of perſons in the Trinity, God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt; all our faith is reſolved at length into one God,

God, but yet withall into three persons in that Divine nature, because as there is God the Father offended, so there must be a God to satisfie that God, and there must bee a God to reveale, and apply that satisfaction. The soul is so full of doubtings, that nothing can set it downe, but that which is above the soule, and above the divell. And therefore for our salvation, and to give us comfort, there is a necessity of three persons in the God-head. The Father is offended, God in the second person must satisfie offended justice; and God in the third person must reveale and apply that satisfaction for comfort. And therfore he names them distinctly

ly (*Ye beleeve in God, &c.*) And becauſe we cannot beleeve in God the Father, but by beleeving in Chriſt, therfore hee joynes them together (ye beleeve in God, ye beleeve alſo in me,) *No man comes to the Father, but by the Sonne.* GOD the Father dwels in the light that no mortall eye can approch unto, only hee hath manifeſted himſelfe in his Sonne, who is the ingraven Image of his perſon; God ſhines in the face of Chriſt, and as hee comes downe, and makes himſelfe knowne to us in his Sonne, ſo wee muſt goe up to him in his Sonne, as he ſaith afterwards: *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* There is no going to the Father but by mee: nothing is more

more terrible then to conceive of God, out of Ghrist, for so he is a *consuming fire:* therefore thinke of God as ours in Christ, carry Christ our elder Brother with us, and desire God to looke upon us in his Sonne.

Quest. Now how doth faith in Christ ease the soule in trouble?

Answ. Many wayes: I will name a few. Faith in Christ banisheth troubles, and bringeth in comfort.

Because it is an emptying grace; it emptieth us of our selves, and so makes us cleave to another, and thereby becomes a grace of union. It is such a grace as brings the soule, and Christ together. Now Christ being the fountaine of comfort,

fort, God having treaſured all comfort in him, for the fulneſſe of the God-head dwels in Chriſt, and faith cauſeth Chriſt to dwell in us, brings the ſoule and Chriſt together, and ſo muſt needs make way for comfort, for it makes us one with the fountaine of comfort. And by its repeated acts derives freſh comfort.

Againe, faith eſtabliſheth the heart. Now to eſtabliſh the ſoule, there muſt be a ſolid Baſis, as in building there muſt be a foundation, and a planting upon that foundation. Now here is a foundation, God & Chriſt, and there muſt be a grace to found, and bottome the ſoule thereupon, and that is faith, and ſo the ſoule is eſta-

eſtabliſhed. The chaine and connexion of cauſes herein is this. God the Father in Chriſt, and by the holy Ghoſt conveyes comforts, through the word laid hold upon by Faith. It is not the word alone, for that is but as the veines and arteries, that conveigh the bloud, and ſpirits. So the Spirit being conveighed by the promiſes, helpeth the ſoul to lay it ſelf upō Chriſt by Faith, which is a grace of union, by which union with him the ſoule is eſtabliſhed.

And then again Faith ſtirreth up ſuch graces, as doe comfort the ſoule, as hope in all good things promiſed. And therefore in the next Verſe hee addes to comfort them, *In my Fathers houſe are*

many

many mansions; and faith is the grace that apprehends the joyes thereof, and hope expects that which faith beleeves, and that hope becomes an anchor to the soule, that stayeth the soule in all the waves & troubles of the world; and what is the ground of that hope but faith? Faith stirreth up hope, and hope pitcheth on the promise, especially of life everlasting. And thus faith becomes a quieting & a stilling grace, because it raiseth the soule by representing and making reall to it, better things then the world can give or take, as it doth also at other times present heavier things then the world can threaten: Faith makes things present to the soule, and 6

and becauſe it layes hold on divine things, greater then any thing here below, therfore it overcomes the world, and all things in the world, yea hell it ſelfe, becauſe it layes hold on heaven and happineſſe, upon the power of God, and the mercy of God in Chriſt, and upon thoſe rich promiſes: What is in the world, or in the ranke of good things, but faith out-bids it by ſetting heaven againſt it: and what evill is there but faith overcomes the feare of it by ſetting hell againſt it? I ſhall have ſuch a good, if I yeeld to ſuch a luſt: I, but what is that to heaven, ſaith Faith? For faith being the Hypoſtaſis, the ſubſtance of things to come, makes them ſub-

ſubſtantiall, and evident to the ſoule, as if they were already ſubſiſtent, being looked upon in the certainty of the word; and ſo it affects the ſoule deepely, and upholds it ſtrongly, even as if the things themſelves were preſent, and ſo it baniſheth and diſpels all diſcomforts, the 11 Chapter to the *Hebrewes* is a Comment upon this truth in the example of *Moſes*, and many others. What greater object of feare might be preſented to a man, then the angry face and countenance of a terrible Tyrant? Yet when by the eye of faith, he ſaw him that was inviſible, and then looked upon *Pharaoh*, what was *Pharaoh*, to God? When *Micaiah* had ſeene GOD

ſit-

sitting on his Throne, what was *Ahab* to him? And when the soule hath entred into the vaile, and sees the glorious things of heaven, and happinesse, what are all things below? Faith sets the soule on a Rocke, above the reach of waves, upon the love of God in Christ. And therefore set the grace of Faith on worke, keepe it on the wing, preserve it on exercise, and faith exercised will be able to comfort the most dejected soule in the world, and to raise it above all the troubles that can bee imagined, or befall us.

The

THE
Second Sermon.

Ioh.ch.14. ver. 1.

Let not your hearts be troubled: ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in me.

THe words of dying men departing out of the world, as being most serious and weighty are most to be regarded. The children of God the neerer they are to heaven, the more suteable they are to their hea-

heavenly condition. So was our Saviour Christ, and therefore he labours to furnish his Disciples (and in them us) with good counsell to establish their hearts against the troubles and scandals to come. If you consider the time when hee spake these words, it was when he himselfe was to be troubled more then ever was any creature: yet hee forgets himselfe, and his future troubles, and thinkes how to raise up and comfort them. Hee foresaw that *Peter* would deny him, that the rest would leave him, he foresaw that they would be dejected, when hee was gone: yet let not your hearts be troubled.

Oh what a blessed and sweet

ſweet Saviour have we, that thinkes more of us, then of himſelfe, that he forgets his owne troubles, and ſuffe-rings, and extremities, and thinkes of the ſupporting and uphoulding of his Diſci-ples!

This came from the ſame love that drew him from heaven to earth, which mo-ved him to take our nature, and in that nature to dye for us: and what may wee not expect from that ſweet and large love? out of the ſame bowels of pitty and com-paſſion, was it (that they ſhould not bee over-much dejected) that hee ſaith, *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

Hee knew his Diſciples were in the ſtate of grace al-ready: yet hee foreſaw they were

were such as would sinne. Nay, that *Peter* would deny him. Yet the foresight of *Peters* and their unkindenesse, did not take away his love, and pitty, and compassion towards them: Yet notwithstanding he gives them sweet counsell; nay after they had dealt unkindely with him, and denyed and forsooke him indeed; hee tooke no advantage of their weakenesse. He knew they had a secret love to him, that they had in them a root of affection, and hee was so farre from taking advantage for it, that presently after he saith, *Tell my brethren, that I ascend to my God, and their God*, yea and *tell Peter so too*, that hath dealt most unkindly of all with mee. What a gracious

gracious and mercifull Saviour have wee, that fore-sees what ill wee will doe, and when we have done it, takes no advantage against us, but is carefull to keepe us from too much dejection, though he knew he would deale so unkindely by him: and indeed he did of purpose take our nature, that he might be a mercifull high Priest.

Christians must distingu sh betwixt *dejection* and *griefe*: It had been a sinne for them not to have grieved, as well as it was a sinne for them to bee over-much troubled. None are more sensi le then a Christian *Sentit dum vincit*, hee feeles troubles whiles he overcomes them.

Christ speakes to the heart, because the heart is

the seat of trouble: *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

Christ could speake to the eares and heart at once, his words were operative, and conveighed comfort with them. Together with his words, hee let in his holy Spirit, that comforted them. Gods commands in the ministery of his word, suppose not that we have any ability to execute them, but together with his word there comes forth a power. As when Christ said, *Lazarus arise:* there went forth a power that caused *Lazarus* to arise. As in the Creation hee said, Let there be light; for the Word, and the Spirit goe together.

Having taken them off from trouble, hee shewes a way

way how to raiſe them, which is by faith. Ye beleeve in God, beleeve alſo in me.

The object in beleeving is God, and Chriſt Mediator: we muſt have both to found our faith upon. Wee cannot beleeve in God, except wee beleeve in Chriſt: For God muſt be ſatisfied by God, and by him that is G O D muſt that ſatisfaction be applyed, the Spirit of God, by working faith in the heart, and for the raiſing of it up when it is dejected; all is ſupernaturall in faith. The things we beleeve are above nature, the promiſes are above nature, the worker of it the holy Ghoſt, is above nature: and every thing in faith is above nature: there

must be a God in whom we beleeve: and a God through whom: if God had not satisfied God, the conscience would never have beene satisfied, there would still have beene misdoubtings. And yet if the holy Ghost sets not down the heart, and convinceth it throughly of the al-sufficiency of that satisfaction, it would never beleeve neither. And therefore as ye beleeve in God, beleeve also in me, for I am God too.

We may know that Christ is God, not only by that which Christ hath done: the Miracles, which none could doe but God, but also by what is done to him. And two things are done to him, which shew that he is God,

that

that is, *Faith*, and *Prayer*, wee muſt beleeve onely in God, and pray onely to God. But Chriſt is the object of both theſe, here he is ſet forth as the object of Faith, and of Prayer in that of Saint *Stephen*, *Lord Ieſus receive my ſpirit.* And therefore he is God, for that is done unto him which is proper & peculiar only to God.

That which I ſhall now touch upon is this: wee muſt remember what a ſtrong foundation, what bottome, and baſis our faith hath; there is God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt, and Chriſt the Mediator, that our faith may be ſupported, we have him to beleeve on, who ſupports heaven and earth. As in 1 *Hebr.* and

Coloſ. 1. he created all things as well as the Father; hee is honoured of all as well as the Father; he that ſupports the pillars of heaven and earth, is able to ſupport the pillars of thy ſoule.

But how doth faith in Chriſt eaſe the ſoul of trouble?

In a word, as it carrieth the ſoule out of it ſelfe unto God in Chriſt, and unto Chriſt, uniting, and making us one with him, and ſo ſets the ſoule above all trouble whatſoever: for being one with Chriſt, wee are already with him in heaven. And againe, Faith is a grace that preſents things to come, as preſent, and ſo eſtabliſheth the ſoule. It is the hypoſtaſis of things,

it

it gives subsistance to them in the promise, and it doth never leave to doe it till the things subsist indeed. It is a grace that accompanieth the soule to heaven, looking upon things in the word of him that is truth it selfe, and so giving a kinde of being to them throughout all the way to heaven, til they have a being indeed. And then faith is out of office, yeelding it up to *sight*, and the full enjoyment of all.

Quest. But did not the Disciples beleeve already?

Answ. Yes they did, but they had need to renew their faith, as occasions were renewed, and as troubles were to increase. *Beleeve in mee*: it is as he should have said, Now there is occasion for

you to use your faith, I must be taken out of your sight, you must see me suffer, and you had need of an extraordinary measure of Faith to see mee in such abasement, and yet to beleeve that I am God.

We must grow from Faith to Faith, that we may live by it continually, and we must increase with the increase of God, that as our difficulties do increase, our strength to goe through them may increase also: as they prayed, Lord increase our faith.

I gave some directions how we might not be troubled.

And first, we must labour to have our part and portion in Christ, else there is nothing belongs to us but trouble. There are two sorts of men

men in the Church, some that usurpe a peace and exemption from trouble, as if joy and comfort were their portion. Sathan is wise enough not to trouble them, and they take an order with their consciences, that they shall not trouble them till needs must, till the houre of death, or some dismall accident: the only way for such is to be troubled, that their trouble may be a foundation of their comfort. For to such as live in their sinnes against conscience apparantly so that every man may see it, and yet are not troubled, they have no interest in comfort, nothing but woe and misery belongs to them. Indeed Christ came to

ſave ſinners, but it is broken-hearted ſinners, penitent ſinners, that are weary, and heavy laden under the burthen of ſinne. And therefore though they ſpeake peace to themſelves, yet we dare not ſpeake any comfort to them from Chriſt: As *Iehu* ſaid to *Ioram*, *What haſt thou to doe with peace, as long as the whoredomes of thy mother Iezebel are ſo many?* Doſt thou talke of peace as long as thou art a ſwearer, a prophane liver, a malitious perſon, againſt all that are truely good? what haſt thou to doe with peace?

Now in the viſible Church there is another ſort that Sathan laboureth to trouble; ſince hee cannot keepe them in the ſtate of nature, but they

they breake from him, Chriſt pulling them out of Sathans kingdome by the power of his ordinances, and holy Spirit, hee labours to trouble them in their peace all he can; becauſe they bee in the world, above the world, he envies their condition, that they ſhould enjoy that paradiſe which hee left, the comforts that hee once had, and therefore hee labours to diſturbe them in their comforts.

The eſtate of ſuch is mixt, here in this world: they have that in them, and without them, which will alwayes be a cauſe and occaſion of trouble. They have corruption in them not altogether ſubdued: and they have without them Sathan taking

taking advantage againſt them: and the world oppoſing them. Theſe although they have ſomething in them that muſt be ſubdued, yet ſomething alſo that muſt be cheriſhed and ſtrengthened. And therefore theſe are the perſons to whom comfort properly belongs.

In heaven wee ſhall have no need of being comforted, for there our peace ſhall be to have no enemies at all: our peace here is to have comfort in the midſt of diſcomfort, and an heart inlarged in troubles.

He ſpeakes this to them here who were beleevers already: *Yee beleeve in God*, who he knew ſhould not be troubled, *Let not your hearts be troubled.* So that to the end we

we may be subjects capable of comfort, we must be such as by Faith are one with Christ, and so reconciled to God. All motion ends in rest; and all the rest of the soule ends in God, the centre of the soule. And therefore before the soul can settle it self, it must be brought to God, through Christ, that must be laid as a ground.

Now there is a threefold malady that troubleth us, and there must be a threefold peace, and ground of comfort against them.

First, it is a trouble to the soule (when once it is awakened) that GOD, and it should be in ill termes, when the soule lookes upon God as angry, and displeased with it.

Againe, the ſoule is troubled, when it lookes upon it ſelfe, and ſees nothing but turmoiles and ſeditions there.

Thirdly, when it lookes upon the affaires of the world, and accidents here below, it is full of confuſion for the preſent; and it is full of feares for time to come, that things will bee worſe and worſe. Thus the ſoule whileſt it is in the world, is troubled; about its peace with God, and with its ſelfe, and about this evill world.

Now before the ſoule can yeeld to any quiet, all theſe quarrels muſt be taken up.

1 A peace muſt be made betwixt God and us, by the great peace-maker, who is alſo called *our peace*, and when

when we be justified and acquitted from our sinnes by the bloud of Christ sprinkled on our soules by faith, that bloud of Christ speakes peace to the soule in the pardon of sinne: *being justified by faith, wee have peace with God, through Iesus Christ our Lord.*

Then secondly, there must be another peace setled in some degree, and that is the peace of government in the soule; grace must be above corruption. They will be together in the soule whilest we are here, but sinne must not have the dominion. This is such a peace, nor, as will admit of no conflict, but a peace wherein grace may get the better, and where grace gets the better, it will keep

keepe corruption under, and GOD gives his Spirit to whom he gives his Sonne: that as we be in good terms with GOD, so our natures may be like his: That wee may love and delight in what he loves and delights in; and so may be as friends, enjoying acquaintance and communion together.

I but thirdly, there is confusion in the world, and many accidents may fall out, that may disquiet us for time to come. Now before the soule can be at peace in that respect, it must know, that being once in Christ, reconciled to God, and having the Spirit of God, it is under a gracious governement and providence, that disposeth all things to good, and maketh

keth every thing peaceable. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia:* When God is at peace, all is at peace, yea so farre at peace, that they have a blessing in them. The curse and venome is taken out of them by Christ, who took the curse on himselfe, and satisfied the wrath of God, and now they bee not onely harmelesse, but medicinall, and helpefull, so that they be all ours, and made in some sort serviceable to further our spirituall good.

When our husband hath all things committed unto him in heaven or earth, will he suffer any thing to befall his dearely beloved Spouse, that shall bee disadvantageous, and prejudiciall to the

the maine. No, no, he will not ſuffer any thing to befall her, which he will not rule, and order, and overrule for the good of the Church, and ſo there comes to be that third peace.

And for the time to come a Chriſtian knowes, that whom Chriſt loves, hee loves to the end, and the good worke begun ſhall be perfected to the day of the Lord. Hee knoweth he is in heaven already in his head: *Hee that beleeves in Chriſt, hath everlaſting life*, and is triumphing in glory in his head.

And therefore nothing can diſmay a Chriſtian that is truely in Chriſt; grant the firſt, grant all, ſtand upon good termes with Chriſt, be re-

reconciled to God, and nothing can doe thee hurt.

But when we at any time come to comfort such as have comfort for their portion, it stickes here; if I were a childe of God indeed, or if I did beleeve, it were something. These be good comforts indeed, and certaine, and true, for they be the word of God: but what is this to me? I finde universally, that comfort stickes there, and therfore we must labour to remove that objection.

First of all therefore labour to have a good judgement of maine truths, that these comforts are the comforts of the holy Ghost, and that the word is the word of God, by a generall knowledge

ledge of the truth of the promiſes, thou ſhalt be better able to apply them. If thou ſticke in the principles, ſo as not to know them, nor to beleeve them, there is no talking of the application of faith upon them; wee muſt make that our owne in particular, which wee beleeve firſt in generall. And therefore Chriſtians muſt firſt be well ſeene in the Scriptures, and in the promiſes there; that they may know what belongs to them, and apply them to themſelves.

I but my faith is weake?

I anſwer: The office of Faith is to knit to Chriſt, and the weakeſt Faith will doe that, as well as the ſtrongeſt: And when we are once one with Chriſt, then our perfection

fection is to bee found in him. It is the office of Faith to bring us to Christ, and then to looke to him for all perfections, and for thy title to heaven, and not to thy faith. And true faith is faith even in the least degree of it. As wee say of the elements, every drop of water is water, and every spark of fire is fire. And therefore the argument will not hold, if wee have not much faith, we have no faith; or if wee have no feeling, wee have no faith. There are many common errours which wee must remove, that they may not hinder us in the application of Christ, by distinguishing betweene stronggrace, & true grace; & above all, labour to know & un-

understand the covenant of grace. The tenor of which requireth no set measures of grace, but if we beleeve, we shall not perish, but have everlasting life, under so gracious and mercifull a covenant are we.

2 But this is not sufficient to satisfie the soule. The very cleaving to Christ is indeed a sufficient ground of comfort, but yet to obtaine actuall comfort, there must be a knowledge that we doe cleave to Christ, and beleeve. There may be adherence without evidence: and there must be an act of reflexion to cause faith of evidence, it must appear to our selves that wee doe beleeve before wee can have comfort, though wee may be true

true Christians, and goe to heaven without it. Therefore let us labour *to make our calling and election sure*: that is, in our selves, and in our owne apprehension: though it be never so sure in it selfe, and in Gods breast, yet wee must labour to make it sure in our owne breasts, that sin may bee pardoned in our owne consciences, that all may bee reconciled in our owne hearts, that what is done in heaven, may bee done in our hearts also, being cleared to our owne assurance. You see what advise the Apostle gives, *Give all diligence*: it is not got without *diligence*, nor without *all diligence*, *to make our calling and election sure*, that is, to make our election sure, by 2 Pet. 1.

by our calling, and to that end *to adde grace to grace.* It is the growing Christian, that is the assured Christian. Whilest wee are yet adding to every heape, *we shall get more abundant entrance, and further into the kingdome of Iesus Christ,* as the Apostle there speakes.

3 And when we have attained any evidence of true faith, labour to keepe that our evidence cleare, let it not be spotted or defiled by any sinfull acts: you have many a good evidence that is so blurred with negligences, and daily errours in speeches and conversation, that when they reflect upon themselves they conclude, Can such a wretch as I, that have so loose a tongue, that have

have no more watchfulneſſe over my heart, have any faith at all. And thus God doth ſuſpend their comforts ſo, that though they may be in a good eſtate for the maine, yet they ſhall not know it, and all becauſe they are not carefull to keep their evidence, which wee ſhould preſerve cleare and bright, that it might be ſeen and read upon all occaſions. And wee ſhould ſo keepe them bright, that our conſciences may witneſſe with us, and that the Spirit and the Word may joyne their witneſſe with our conſciences. The Word ſaith, *That he that loves the brethren is tranſlated to life*, & he that hears the word, as the word, is Chriſts ſheep. Now doth thy

conſcience tell thee, that though in weake meaſure, yet *I doe ſo?* Then here is the word, and thy conſcience for thee: and doth the ſpirit witneſſe with thy cõſcience that it is ſo indeed? then it is well, thou keepeſt thy Evidence to purpoſe.

4 And when wee have done this, let us make conſcience not to yeeld to any baſe doubts, and feares, and objections of Sathan, and our owne hearts. When we finde any worke of grace, deny not the work of God, leſt we grieve the Spirit of God. As ſome melancholy Chriſtians, that though every man may ſee the worke of God in them, yet yeeld ſo ſlaviſhly to the miſgivings of their hearts, and the temp-

temptations of Sathan, that they conclude they have no faith, no love: though other Christians that can reade their evidence better, see that they have these in them; what dishonour is this to God and his Spirit, when a darke humour shall prevaile more then the Word, the truth it selfe: this is a great bondage which Sathan brings the soule into: that when there is evidence of faith in the fruits of it, yet men will beleeve a peevish humour, before the word and testimony of conscience, enlightened by the spirit. Take heed of it as a great pride in the heart, when wee yeeld more to a sturdy, darke, unsubdued humour, then to Evidence

it selfe.

Therefore in such cases hearken not to what feare sayes, or humour saith, or Sathan saith, or what the world saith, but hearken what truth it selfe saith, and what conscience saith, when it is enlightened by the Spirit, as in good times when wee are at the best. True Christians, though more remisse, shall have so much comfort as shall support them from falling into despaire, yet not so much as shall strengthen them, and carry them into a vigorous life, fit for Christians.

5 When we have found any worke of grace, and thereupon that our faith is true, wee ought to comfort our selves, and to maintaine

our

our comfort by all meanes. Every grace is but faith exercised: when our Saviour saith, *Yee beleeve in God, beleeve also in mee*, hee might have said also in particular, Be patient, be contented, be comforted. But hee names the root of all, Faith, wherein all graces are radically, which is therfore discerned in the fruits of it, so that if any grace be found, as love to the brethren, hope of life everlasting, or the like, there is faith. For the root and branches bee together, though the root is not alwaies discerned. And therefore when we discover any true faith in the fruit of it, let us support and comfort our selves with it.

For whē a man is in Christ,

and by Christ an heire of heaven, and a child of God, what in the world can befall him, that should deject over-much, and cast him downe? What losse, what crosse, what want of friends, hath he not all in God, and in Christ, and in the promise? Doe not the promises weigh down all discouragements whatsoever? Surely they doe. And therefore we must strive against dejection. For besides what I spake the last day, it is a dishonour to the profession of Religion, which is in it self so glorious, a dishonour to God, and to Christ, that when we have such glorious prerogatives and priviledges, which the Angels themselves admire; yet every petty crosse

and

and losse that we meet with-all in the world should cast us downe, wee should take heed exceedingly of this, and should labour every day to have a more and more cleare sight of the promises that belong unto us, and to know the priviledges of Christianity, and renew our faith in them continually, that they may be fresh to us in all temptations, and occasions whatsoever.

I beseech you do but consider any one grand promise, which if it be rooted in the soule, how it is able to support the soule against all troubles whatsoever. As that, *Feare not little flocke, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdome.* Or that other: *If God spared not*

his Sonne for us; how will hee not with him give us all things else?

Labour to have these things fresh in memory, together with the priviledges belonging to Christians. Thinke what is it to bee a childe of God, and an heire of heaven.

We must not looke onely to the blinde and darke side of our condition. Christians have two sides, one to heaven-ward, and God-ward; and that is full of glory, certaine, and immoveable. Another towards the world, and that is oftentimes full of abasement, full of disgrace, and dejection. That is moveable, sometimes better, sometimes worse, as God pleaseth to dis-

dispense his government in the Church. Let us looke to the grace, to the cõforts that belong to that grace, to the promises, the beſt ſide, and not to be carried away with the darkneſſe of the other.

It is a terrible ſight to look upon ſinne, and miſery, and hell, & judgement to come; but what are theſe to a Chriſtian that is in Chriſt, that ſeeth them all ſubdued, and overcome to him? The afflictions of the world, and the croſſes of the world, what are they to a ſoule, that is already in heaven by faith, and ſeeth them all overcome in his head Chriſt? *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* And therefore wee muſt not bee ſo malignant, as to looke

all upon one part of a Christian, and that the worser part which is the object of sence; for shame, live not by sence: but if we be Christians, let us live by faith, looke to the best part: looke upwards and forwards to that which is eternall.

5 And withall labour to keepe the graces of the Spirit in continuall exercise upon all occasions. For grace exercised brings certaine comfort: it may bee with a Christian in his feelings as with the worst man living; but hee may thanke his owne negligence, his owne dulnesse; his not stirring up of the graces of God in him. For therefore it is that he hangs the wing upon every petty crosse, on every

very occasion: Labour to have an heart ready to exercise grace suteable to that occasion; for then grace will reflect sweetly, where there is sincerity and grace in exercise. Sincerity alone will not comfort a man, unlesse it grow up to fruitfulnesse: & fruitfulnesse which springs from the exercise of grace, hath a sweet reflection upon the soule. *Remember Lord how I have walked before thee, in truth, and with a perfect heart*, saith *Hezekiah*. He stood then most in need of comfort, and this comforted him, this his reflection upon his former sincerity. So when a man can appeale unto God, as *Peter* did, *Lord thou knowest I love thee: so much sincerity: so much bold-*

boldnesse with God. And therfore let us keep grace in exercise, that we may be fruitfull in our lives and conversations, and then we shall be alwaies comfortable.

And to adde a little, there is no grace in a Christian, but if it be exercised there is a suteable comfort upon it even here in this world. There is a *Præmium ante Præmium*, A reward before a reward. Nay, the Heathen men, *Socrates*, and the best of them, so farre as they exercised the naturall goodnesse that was in them; their consciences reflected peace; so farre as they were good, and did good, they had peace, much more peace then bad men had. God gave even them some re-

wards,

wards, upon discharge of their duties: he will not be beholden to any man, that exerciseth any degree of goodnesse that is in him. Much more therfore shall a child of God enjoy it, when he exerciseth his graces in any tẽptatiõ, when he overcomes any uncleane, earthly, vaine-glorious, vindictive, or any other base lust, hee shall finde peace of conscience suteable: and the more he growes in strength, and resolution for the time to come, the more he groweth in inward peace. *Righteousnesse* and *peace* goe together, not only the righteousnesse of Christ, and our reconciliation before God, but also the righteousnesse of an holy life, & peace in our own con-

consciences.

The righteousnesse of Christ entitles to heaven, and the righteousnesse of an holy life sheweth my title unto comfort. As faith in Christs righteousnes brings peace, so sanctification also: Christ is *first King of righteousnesse*, and then *King of peace*. And therefore where there is no righteousnesse, there is no peace. But on the contrary, as heat followeth the fire, and as the beames have an emanation from the Sunne, so doth comfort arise from grace, especially from grace exercised.

Heb. 7. 1.

Therefore they that would have inward peace, let them labour to be gracious, and that not onely in the inward frame of the heart,

heart, but in the exercise of grace upon all occasions. *For they that walke according to this rule*, that is, of the new creature, *peace be to them, and the whole Israel of God*, Gal. 15. 16. an exact and carefull life will bring constant peace.

Therefore let us labour first for interest in Christs righteousnesse, and then for the righteousnesse of an holy life; for a conscience to justifie us, that we have no purpose to live in any sinne, and a not accusing conscience will bee a justifying conscience. What a blessed condition shall we be in, to be in Christ, and to know that we are so? Oh the heaven on earth of such a man, as is in that condition! For which

which way soever he looks, hee findes matter of comfort. If he lookes backward, to the governement of the Spirit that hath ruled him in the former part of his life, he may say with Saint *Paul*, *I have fought a good fight, I have runne the race that God hath set before me.* And what a sweet reflection is this? he is not afraid to looke backe to his life past as other men. If hee lookes forward, hee seeth a place prepared for him in heaven, and there he sees himselfe already in Christ: henceforth *there is laid up for me a crown of righteousnesse, which the righteous Iudge shal give me at that day:* and all that love his appearing, saith he, there. When there comes ill tydings of the

2 Tim. 4. 7

the Church abroad, and at home, it doth not much dismay him, his heart is fixed, he beleeveth in God, and in Christ, and that keepes him from being like a reed shaken with every winde. For reproches, and disgraces that he meets withall in the world, hee weares them as his crowne, if they be for Religion & goodnesse sake. For his witnesse is in heaven, and in his owne conscience. And God in heaven, and his conscience within, doe acquit him, and if he suffer for his deserts, yet in all afflictions God dealeth with him as a correcting father, he knoweth he hath deserved them; but he looks on them as comming from a father in covenant with him: And what

what can come from a Father, but what is ſweet? He ſees it moderated & ſweetned, and in the iſſue tending to make him more holy, The ſting is taken out, and a bleſſing is upon it, to make him better. And therefore what can make a Chriſtian uncomfortable, when hee hath the Spirit of Chriſt, and faith the root of grace?

Theſe comforts being warmed with meditation, will ſtick cloſe to the heart: comforts that are digeſted, are they that worke. Let them therefore not onely enter into the braine and fleet there, but let them ſinke into the heart by often conſideration of Gods love in Chriſt, and the priviledges of Chriſtians here,

here, and in heaven, where our head is, and where wee ſhall be ere long. Warme the heart with theſe, and ſee if any petty thing can caſt thee downe.

FINIS.